

THE HURTING, THE HEALING, THE LOVING by CarrieWrites

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Summary:

THE HURTING

She lost her little sister, and in the process, she slowly started to lose herself and her family and friends.

Or so she thought.

THE HEALING

After the boys save her from a possible death after finding her sleeping at the graveyard next to her sister's grave in a snowstorm in Hawkins, she begins a process of refinding herself with the help of her friends.

THE LOVING

She has started loving herself again, despite what her parents have become in the wake of her sister's death. She doesn't need them to feel loved.

She has herself and her friends.

~Dedicated to my Abuelo and Capi...may they rest in peace in Heaven.~

THE HURTING, THE HEALING, THE LOVING

"SOMEONE HELP ME PLEASE!!"

A brunette is rocking back and forth, holding onto a small brunette in her arms in the middle of the road.

Tears are streaming down her cheeks, blood coating her clothes.

"¡POR FAVOR! ¡AYÚDEME POR FAVOR!"

She screamed, sobbing, tears falling down her freckled cheeks, two bikes lay on the ground, one destroyed.

The small brunette lay motionless in her arms, her chest falling and raising softly.

The brunette turned to the walkie-talkie laid on the floor, her eyes widening.

She leaned and grabbed it, turning it to the police station channel.

She turns on the volume knob to it's maximum, and with a shaking hand, she pressed it on.

"SOMEONE HELP ME PLEASE! ¡POR FAVOR, MI HERMANA PEQUEÑA!"

The static crackled before a woman's voice says calmly;

"What happened? What's your name and where are you and your sister? And please, in English."

The girl took a shaky breath and whimpered;

"My hermanita was run over a car while we were crossing the street on our bikes! Por favor, my name is Jessica Vera Hernandez, and my hermanita Gabriella Thea Hernandez is dying!! Hurry!"

Jessica was being escorted to her parents by two adults she didn't even bother learning her names.

When she saw them, she burst into more tears.

"¡MAMÁ! ¡PAPÁ!" she shrieked, causing them to turn, her Mamá letting out a shaky breath of relief.

"¡Ah, gracias a Dios! Jessica!" she exclaimed, embracing the nine-year-old.

Jessica sobbed in her mother's shirt, shaking heavily, crying wildly as the lights flicker on and off.

Someone cursed about the power going crazy since they got here, Jessica's mother covering her ears to block her from hearing the curses that she unfortunately already knows.

"Come on Belleza Pecos, let's get you home and changed." her Mamá whispered, causing Jessica to nod.

"S-S-Si Mamá."

X

Jessica stepped into the shower, shakily washing herself of the blood that stained her skin, washing her face from the sticky tear stains on her cheeks.

She heard the phone go off when she turned off the running water, wrapping herself in the towel.

She watched as her mother picked up the phone, slowly changing into her sweater and overalls, brushing her hair.

She heard her Mamá shriek, causing her to run to the living room where she saw her mother sobbing over the telephone.

Her eyes widening when she shrieked;

"¿ESTÁ MUERTA?!"

Jessica felt as if someone kicked her in the chest, her breathing becoming ragged, her brain going blank.

She shakily backed to the front door, opening it and closing it.

She turned around and slowly walked towards the back of her house, stepping towards the forest.

The deeper she ventured into the forest, the more labored her breathing became.

She dropped to her knees, her eyes watering with tears.

Her lips trembled, her eyebrows furrowing.

Suddenly, she threw her head back, letting out a loud wail of agony, tears streaming down her cheeks.

"SHE DIED!! ¡¡ELLA ESTÁ MUERTA!!"

X

Jessica was curled up in a ball in the middle of the woods, tears still running down as she just laid there.

"JESS!"

"JESSICA!"

"HERNANDEZ!"

"JESS!"

Her lips trembled.

She can't...

She can't face them yet...

"JESSICA WHERE ARE YOU?!"

She heard footsteps, that to her disappointment was getting closer.

"Jess!"

She heard the footsteps coming closer, and it wasn't long before her best friend was in front of her, his eyebrows furrowing.

"Jess?"

Her blue eyes looked up to meet his brown ones.

"Mike..."

"We heard what happened...are you okay?"

She shook her head, hearing more footsteps.

"Come on Hernandez, let's get you up."

"Come on Jess, let's get you home."

Two sets of new arms pull her up, causing her to immediately throw her arms around the figure to her right, shaking heavily.

The scent of faint chocolate and the forest lingered on his clothes, causing her to melt into his embrace as he hugged back.

"Dustin..."

"It's okay Hernandez, we got you."

She feels soft lips on top of her head, causing her to let out a shaky sob, clutching onto Dustin a bit tighter.

Soon, three more figures joined in the hug, all whispering reassuring words to her.

They didn't get it.

She lost her baby sister.

Her hermana menor...

Su hermanita...

She felt dead tired, and the boys seemed to get that because, the next thing she knows, someone lifts her up on his back, giving her a piggy-back ride.

"Lucas?"

"We're taking you home Jessica, okay? You can't stay out here, you'll catch a cold."

She couldn't even fight as her head fell forward on his shoulder, falling asleep.

Lucas sent a worried glance at the other boys as they walked back to her house.

"We don't mention Gabby unless Jess does or we absolutely HAVE to, we all agree on that?" a new voice pops up, causing them to turn to him.

"Obviously Will. I mean...we were all friends with Gabby but, this was Jessica's little sister. Her 'hermanita' to quote." Mike says, looking worriedly at the latina, tear streaks visible in her constellation-filled cheeks.

Dustin let out a shaky chuckle, shaking his head.

"And to think...just yesterday...we were all at Mike's place for our Elder Tree Campaign."

The boys became quiet, remembering how Gabby saved the Party from the monster Mike whipped out with a 14, Jessica screaming 'THAT'S MY SISTER!' at the top of her lungs, hugging Gabby, placing kisses on her face.

Nancy even had agreed to dress up for the campaign, laughing as the two sisters cheered the other on.

Jessica the Scholar and Gabriella the Poison Ivy...

...Were sadly no more....

X

"Jessica, please, eat."

Dustin was practically begging Jessica who dumped her food into the trash can.

She looked at him, dark bangs under her eyes and her hair unkempt.

She turned to leave the lunch room, causing him to sigh, the other boys walking up to him.

"Still refusing to eat?" Lucas asked, his eyebrows furrowing in worry.

"I don't get it! Shouldn't she be improving?" Dustin whimpered, looking at the boys, all having worried glances.

"Her sister's funeral is tomorrow. Maybe that's why." Will guessed, Mike, shaking his head.

"No, that's not it. She hasn't been eating since the day Gabby..."

"It's been two WEEKS guys! TWO WEEKS!" Dustin exclaimed.

"We KNOW Dustin! We know and NOBODY'S helping her!" Mike bites back, turning red.

"Well do something! She's YOUR crush!"

"SHE'S NOT!"

"GUYS ENOUGH!" Lucas exclaimed, causing the two to look at him.

"Let's just...let's just be there tomorrow...for Jess. Okay?"

The two nodded.

X

Jessica was dressed in all black, glancing at the mirror.

Her Mamá had forced her to take a shower, the first since a whole week.

She admitted...it felt nice.

A nice way to cry out her pain.

She lets out a sob as she wrapped her arms around herself, shaking slightly.

It made her feel so...weak.

Unloved.

Unwanted.

At least that's what her parents told her anyways.

And she believed them.

"JESSICA! ¡VAMOS!"

Jessica's lips trembled, before leaving her room, closing the door.

X

The boys were with the small group of people at the graveyard, looking at the closed casket, with a saddened glance.

Lucas glanced up and hit Dustin in the shoulder, his eyebrows furrowing.

Mike noticed and glanced up as well, his heart dropping immediately.

Jessica was walking with her parents, all in black.

She saw the boys and forced a smile to play on her lips for a mere 3 seconds before it dropped, bowing her head down.

"She looks so miserable." Will whispered, frowning in worry.

She was.

X

As the Priest spoke, Jessica started to cry, the tears dribbling down her cheeks.

She wiped her tears, shaking slightly, the temperature seeming to have dropped immensely, as she let out a shaky breath.

She wiped her nose, sighing as blood smeared on her hand.

Her parents said it was due to her stress, and she believed them, knowing she felt this immense stress to realize that, no matter how much she wants it, she's never going to see her sister again.

She glances up at the boys, swallowing as they caught her stare, worried glances at her.

She bowed her head, sniffing, wiping her tears.

She REALLY needed someone right now.

X

After the funeral, the boys ran up to Jessica, pushing past her surprised parents, and engulfed her in a much-needed hug.

Jessica let in a shaky gasp as they crumbled into the floor, hugging each other tightly.

She burst out into more sobs, hugging all four of them as tight as she could, Mike lifting her head up and kissing her forehead.

"We got you, Jess, we got you."

She WANTED to believe them...

But her parents already manipulated her into thinking that wasn't true...

That they didn't really care...

X

It was December, officially a month after Gabriella's funeral.

Jessica hadn't improved in the slightest.

Sure, she started eating again, but it wasn't enough.

She had stopped speaking in English in general, and so many people were left confused when she did speak, her parents refusing to translate.

She also had many bruises that she covered with her clothes that she REFUSES to speak about, even in her first language.

She had been avoiding the boys after the funeral, which, she admitted was DESTROYING her emotionally.

She loved them, she really did.

But...she didn't think they cared, or loved her.

Which, if the boys heard, would say that was absolute bullshit, excuse their language.

She was in the graveyard, sitting at her sister's tombstone, laying on the ground, shuddering in the cold.

She wasn't planning on falling asleep there.

She didn't know there was a snowstorm happening an hour after she fell asleep.

She didn't know that she was probably going to die that day.

...But didn't thankfully to her best friends who had gone looking for her since she hadn't been picking up their calls on the Supercomm she left at her house.

*~ *THE HEALING* ~*

"GUYS!! SHE'S OVER HERE!!"

Will had run over to Jessica's shuddering body, her eyes closed.

He pulled her up, patting off the snow that covered her body, freezing when he saw how pale her face had become, her lips completely blue.

"GUYS! HURRY!!"

Mike arrived first, the wind picking up, helping Will pick Jess up.

"Jesus, she's light," Mike whispered, lifting her on his back, Lucas, and Dustin arriving.

"Where can we bring her? I don't know about you guys but, I don't think her parents are much help. I know they're grieving but...they let this go too far." Lucas says, shaking his head.

"Let's take her to my house. My mom will help her." Will says.

"We're ALL going to help her. I don't care if she tries to push us away, we let this go on long enough." Mike says, angry that they let this continue to this extent.

"Agreed. Let's go." Dustin says, leading the way back to the Byers' house.

X

Jessica woke up, feeling extremely warm.

And wet.

In a quick realization, she sat up, catching the attention of the adult in the room.

"Oh, sweetheart!"

Jessica turned to look at the woman, wiping her eyes until her eyes focused.

"M-Ms. Byers?"

"Oh, thank god you're awake. The boys found you at the graveyard, laying down in a middle of a snowstorm. They brought you here."

Jessica looked around and realized she was in a bathroom, and she was in the bathtub, and realized something;

Ms. Byers was taking care of her.

Why?

"Why are...you...taking care of me?" she croaked, her voice sounding weak.

"Jessica, you were out there, all by yourself, in the middle of a snowstorm! You were freezing when the boys brought you here. No one in their right mind wouldn't take care of you."

Jessica looked at Joyce at awe, this woman being the first adult to give her comfort.

"I know you're sad about Gabby, but...don't push the boys away. They didn't want you to know but...they missed you. They were miserable without you. They need their Scholar, okay?"

Jessica nodded, tears running down her cheeks.

"Thank you...Mama Byers."

Joyce smiled at the nickname, placing a kiss on top of Jessica's head.

"Now, let's get you changed and something to eat, okay?"

"Okay."

X

When Jessica appeared from the bathroom in a t-shirt, sweats, and socks, she was engulfed in a hug by four figures.

She cried, hugging them back, all of them crumbling into the floor.

"I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY!"

She felt AWFUL.

She never realized how they were affected.

"No, no Jess, it's okay! We're just glad you're alright." Mike says, causing Jess to shake her head.

"No, it's not! I pushed you boys away because I...I believed that you guys hated me for G-Gabby dying."

Dustin scoffs.

"Who or what the hell put that in your amazing brain?" he asks, hugging her.

She remained quiet, not wanting to say her parents.

"...Some people I thought were my friends. Not you guys obviously."

"Well, no shit Jessica! Sorry, Ms. Byers..." Lucas exclaims, adding the last part quickly.

"You're our girl, Jessica! You and Gabby were our girls! And still are! You're stuck with us until the very end!" Mike says, hugging the Colombian tightly, kissing the side of her head.

"Yeah, Jess! You can't escape us, you're one of us now! Since you immigrated here!" Dustin says, causing Jessica to let out a laugh.

Wow...she hasn't laughed since their Elder Tree Campaign.

She let out a sigh before letting out a small smile, tears still streaming down her cheeks as the boys hugged her again.

"We love you, Jess, don't forget that, alright?"

She nodded, letting out a sigh.

She wasn't going to let another opinion from another source tell her otherwise.

"Yeah, I know. I love you guys too."

X

The next couple days, she stayed at the Byers house, getting better, physically and emotionally.

Joyce found out that the problem was that Jess was being surrounded by negative energy at her house, which was part of the process of her unable to move on and start feeling happy again.

So, while Jess stayed at the Byers house, she grew close to Jonathan, immediately taking an interest in his photography, and she grew closer to Will, taking up his love for arts, learning how to draw herself, which also helped her emotions a lot.

She helped with Joyce around the house, both being able to share conversations that were specifically for the two of them.

She managed to catch up with the boys again in terms of school work, all of them pitching to help her study until she got back on her feet again. And even then, they still studied together, it became a habit for them now.

She was smiling more often and laughing again, whether it was from Lucas' and Dustin's bickering or it was from Mike's sarcastic comments, but it was mainly from their monthly campaigns at Mike's house.

Even with her returning to her house once she was back to what she believed was her old self, and her parents still attempting to break her down again, she vowed that, if she ever became depressed again, that she wasn't going to let it affect her relationships with the boys, or with anyone close to her.

It was like that for three years...

And then Will went missing on November 6, 1983.

And they met a girl called 'Eleven' the night after.

And their worlds took a turn, for better AND for worse.

Within the week of knowing her, they found out she was telekinetic,

that bad men were after her, Will was alive and NOT dead, and...oh...right...

Jessica apparently had POWERS.

She made Mike and Eleven swear to keep it a secret from their friends until she was comfortable about telling them.

And then...the night of November 12, 1983...the 4 year anniversary of Gabby's death...Eleven sacrificed herself to protect her friends.

Jessica was devastated, but she vowed to herself to not spiral into that depressed state like she did four years ago.

She was going to control it...as best as she could anyway.

She also had to keep tabs on Mike who was also devastated.

She had slip-ups that literally marked her, but, she still thought she was doing a bit better than she had previously had.

Then, on November 3, 1984, even came back, and even though she was incredibly grateful that she was safe, that she was okay, it angered her that she also was their best shot at closing the gate, which meant going back to the place that took her away from them in the first place.

But, Eleven had to go, and she did, but not without talking to Mike first, and then Jessica.

When they left, Jessica, Mike, Dustin, Lucas, and the new girl Max planned to help Eleven by setting the hub that connects all the tunnels on fire, and with Billy's car they stole (minor setback), they made their way to the tunnels, setting it on fire.

On their way back, Jessica fell asleep on top of her boyfriend's shoulder, the stress of the past few days since Halloween catching up to her.

But...she had a smile on her lips as she did so.

She was happy.

*~ *THE LOVING* ~*

It was the Snowball, and Jessica had danced two songs with Dustin, both making their way back to the group, Jessica hugging Eleven.

"Hi, El! Glad you could make it!"

"Me too."

Jessica grinned before turning to Mike.

"You didn't step on her feet now, did you, Wheeler?"

"Oh my god, Jess! I'm not THAT bad!"

Eleven giggled as Jessica rolled her eyes.

"Yeah, yeah. Say that to MY feet at the 3rd-grade spring talent show!"

"WE WERE SEVEN YEARS OLD!! EXCUSE ME FOR HAVING TWO LEFT FEET BACK THEN!!"

The gang laughed as Jessica rolled her eyes.

"Excuses, excuses. Gabby was a better dancer than you anyways!"

The table went quiet.

"Who's Gabby?" Max asked, clearly not getting how Jessica ducked her head down.

"My little sister. She died when we were nine." Jessica says, rubbing her arms.

"She was a good dancer?" Eleven asked, shifting the conversation from the fact that she was dead, shooting a Max a look to not ask how.

Jessica smiled.

"The best. She actually got Lucas to dance with her once, and back then, it was unheard of." she laughed, causing Mike, Will, and Dustin to laugh, making Lucas roll his eyes.

"I only danced with her because she was younger than us and she was making those puppy eyes at me. I had no chance." Lucas says, causing Dustin to roll his eyes.

"Yeah, and you had a huge crush on her too."

"NO, I DIDN'T!" Lucas exclaimed, his cheeks darkening.

"You're blushing! You did!" Jessica laughed, smirking at him.

"Yeah...well...YOU had a crush on Mike!" Lucas exclaimed, causing her to roll her eyes, Mike as well.

"Yeah, we all know this. I had a crush on him when I was EIGHT. Mike had a crush on me when he was NINE, we're not ashamed to say it. Hell, I had a crush on EL when I was FIVE. That's all they were, CRUSHES. We ALL get them." Jessica says, Eleven smiling at her.

"I had a...crush?...on you when we were separated..." Eleven confessed, causing Jess to laugh.

"See? El had a crush on me when she was SEVEN, we all get them. Obviously, some of the crushes we have on each other vanish, some don't."

The gang smiled at each other.

"But I know one thing for certain, I love you all. To the Party!" Jessica says, lifting her cup of punch.

The gang lifts up their cups of punch.

"To the Party!"

X

Jessica was in the graveyard, holding a flower, standing in front of

her sister's tombstone.

"Hey, little sis. Snow Ball was today. I danced with Dustin and hanged out with the Party. Mike and El are officially a couple now...finally."

She laughed, smiling at the sky full of snowflakes.

"Things have been crazy these past few years since you've been gone but...I wouldn't have it any other way. I just wish you were here to see it is all."

She sniffed, wiping a lone tear.

"I've finally moved on with the fact that you're not going to come back. Doesn't mean I'm not going to miss you, I still do. The boys still do. I just...finally found peace with the fact. I'll see you when my time comes, okay?"

She places the flower down, smiling at the tombstone.

"Te amo, Gabriella. Adios."

*~ **THE END** ~*